

## Referee

with Mr. Nicholas B. Wood, Isabella County Trial Court

### Keywords

**Accounting** – A course of study about the principles and procedures of recording, reporting, and analyzing the financial (money) transactions of a business.

**Attorney** – A professional who has earned a law degree, passed the bar exam, and is licensed by the State Bar of Michigan to practice law in the state. Also known as a lawyer.

**“Best Interests of the Child”** – A term that describes how courts decide what is best for a child, including services, actions, and placement, meaning who can best take care of a child. For definitions based in state law, see [MCL 400.115f](#) (adoption), [MCL 722.23](#) (child custody).

**Chief Judge** – A judge appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court who is responsible for administration of the court in which he or she serves, including policies, case management, and carrying out Supreme Court orders. For details, see [MCR 8.110](#).

**Child Abuse** – Mistreatment of a minor by an adult legally responsible for the minor.

**Child Custody** – The responsibility to care for and exercise control over a child.

**Child Neglect** – The failure of a parent, guardian, or custodian of a minor to provide the minor with proper or necessary support, education, medical care, or physical care; also, the failure to provide a fit home environment for the minor.

**Child Protective Proceedings** – Proceedings in the family division of the circuit court involving children under age 18 who are abused or neglected.

**Child Support** – In domestic relations cases, ongoing payments made by a parent to meet the financial needs of that parent’s child, including medical, dental, educational, and child care expenses.

**Domestic Relations** – Cases involving divorce, marriage, paternity, child or spousal support, custody of a minor, parenting time, grandparenting time, or related matters.

**Evidence** – Testimony, documents, physical objects, or other things presented at a trial or court hearing for the purpose of proving or disproving facts relevant to a case. Specific procedures must be followed for evidence to be used; evidence must be “properly admitted.”

**General Practitioner** – An attorney who practices in many areas of the law, especially in a small law firm or on their own as a solo practitioner.

**Juvenile Delinquency** – Criminal offenses committed by juveniles.

**Law Firm** – A group of lawyers who are in business together.

**Law School** – A three-year course of study after earning a bachelor’s (undergraduate) degree; schools must be accredited (officially approved) by the American Bar Association.

**Order** – A direction of a court, which must be followed, made orally or in writing.

**Parenting Time** – The time a child spends with a noncustodial parent (a parent that does not have custody).

**Preside** – To direct and have authority over the proceedings.

**Quasi-Judicial** – The ability to hold hearings on, and conduct investigations into, disputed claims and alleged infractions of rules and regulations and to make decisions in the general manner of courts. A referee or district court magistrate is a quasi-judicial officer of their respective court.

**Referee** – A person who takes testimony, prepares reports, and makes recommendations to the court in domestic relations, juvenile delinquency and child protective proceedings, and in designated proceedings involving juveniles.

**Render** – To give or announce a decision.

**Testimony** – The statement of a witness under oath given as evidence.

**For more definitions, see the Michigan Judicial Institute's [Handbook of Legal Terms](#).**